

# RAIN

Maurice Scully

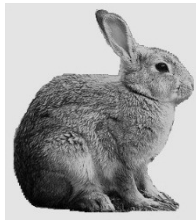


Smithereens Press



RAIN

Maurice Scully



Smithereens Press 2

*RAIN*

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Text set in Times New Roman 10 point.

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RAIN  
[signed piece]



## **RAIN**

[signed piece]

Stop.

A toddler  
playing  
with  
his

tin bucket  
& broken  
spade

in a small cracked  
black & white  
photo from  
the 50s

popped out of  
a book on  
yr desk

leaf-shaped fibulae  
spears & shields  
a stony ingle  
a

quiet cell  
in the woods  
berries birdsong  
rootlets

that  
trickle

down  
through  
separating

/ ...

earth-crumbs  
cuckoo-spit  
nettle-stalk  
conduits

gullies of fire/I/  
whose flames  
lick &  
twist

around blackened  
jagged rocks  
rear &  
flick

as a fly zips by  
overhead  
then dis  
appears

into  
the  
light

(

)

h'm or is  
it ice melting  
in a forest  
gully I/stop/

this must  
be that  
beautiful  
little quick

/ ...



feathered  
animal  
feeding by  
the

wave-edge  
just  
recently  
arrived

to here  
here this  
piece

one  
hitting  
another  
&

spliced  
pips  
kernels  
shells

with that  
dark  
shimmer

of  
alpha  
bets

& grammars  
come  
down

/ ...

quietly  
on to  
the leaves  
of

the canopy  
in the  
garden

where  
you  
stop to

listen to  
look  
back

*touch*

fleck  
of paper  
caught  
in a

bent staple  
patterns  
in  
a

book  
opened  
on a  
table

that make  
your  
take your  
name-

/ ...

shell  
twistedly  
melted  
into it

(

)

moved  
glasses-case  
to the left  
held page

down  
flat like  
that so  
that

who it's  
for is  
dully  
audible

a white  
speck

*-door-*

sliding  
over black  
in twilight

become a

*-door-*

swan each

/ ...

-door-door-

:

tree a  
sheath of

-door-

moving  
moisture  
each forest  
a colony

:

of glistening  
spirits in the  
transpiration  
stream

:

between  
base &  
open  
sky \_

:

:

—

:

—

:

—

:

—

it's been  
swell folks  
but don't  
ask me

:

ask me why  
just stamp yr  
feet into a nearby  
pool then

:

:

dip this piece  
into that pot  
there then  
weave &

:

:

:

/ ...

ooze where  
let's see - wow -  
flatten it - work  
this

box  
until it gets to  
cohere left  
to right

itself & fall  
apart again  
too. There.

Blob.

. . .

And for its feet  
he made some  
colourful shoes &  
for its skull he  
made a papier-  
maché stopper.  
He was sixty &  
he was ready  
believe you me.

*Be wise*  
*be calm*  
*be consistent*  
*be resourceful*  
*be forthright*  
*be genuine*  
*be alert*  
*be sociable*  
*be objective*  
*be free*  
*be careful.*

( )  
( )  
( )



## NOTE

'Rain' derives in part from watching the outlines of flight of some nail-clippings as they land on grass. The idea of fitting this action into a book of 'dances' (it eventually became the rain) occupied me for a long time. Another element in the piece is a photograph of Roy Lichtenstein signing copies of his prints.\* That picture shows the artist among several tables adding his seal of value to what is to a large extent the work of a team of master printers & sophisticated equipment.

This got me thinking on the 'magic' hovering around name & number. The absence of that effect in embedding one's own name into the body of one's own poem, 'forest/gully', 'for is/dully', 'for its skull he' etc., makes for a striking difference in outcome. This in turn brought me to the idea of giving the rain a competing voice as well as its graphic presence & sporadic murmur (repeated plosives etc.). It seemed important too to let the tension come in from another language as out of another element staining the ink on the page as it were by cutting across the stanza flow ('door' is the Irish language 'deor' distorted).

The number of stanzas, 60, is the signature of this writer's life so far.

The 'empty stanzas' can be read as gestural parts of the dance.

The final stanza consists of some astrological advice found in an old Athens newspaper on the island of Patmos. It can be read as more rain-music, but in another key.

The roman alphabet as a sub-motif suggested some of the lexis towards the end ('wow', 'box', 'why' & 'ooze' for example) & this in turn is taken up in other parts of the book of which it forms a part, 'Several Dances'. As are the motif of printing & the motif of the business politics of art.

All of which of course is a long way away from nail-clippings. And is subjective & unnecessary to know in the first place other than to give the reader some idea of how the thing was put together.

The photo that pops out of the book on the desk at the opening is an actual item from the author's early childhood & synecdoche for a local obsession with lyrical autobiography.

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\*In 'Contemporary Master Prints from the Lilja Collection', Lilja Art Foundation/Azimuth Eds, 1995. Lichtenstein is signing copies of *Wallpaper with Blue Floor Interior* while assistants blow-dry the marks as he moves along.



Maurice Scully was born in Dublin in 1952. Many books generally available. 'Rain' is from his forthcoming book *Several Dances*.



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